

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

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USICA

STATE FOR PM/PALMER AND ACDA/HALSTED; DOD FOR ISA/THOMPSON;

JCS FOR VAN ALLEN; NSC FOR PUTNAM

E.O. 11652: NA

SUBJECT: DISARMAMENT

REF: USICA 15297; USICA 17060

1. NO MORE THAN A DOZEN MEN ARE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED WITH THE ISSUES. AT ONE END, THEY ARE THE NATION'S PRIME MOVERS; THE PRESIDENT, THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. IN THE MIDDLE COME THE TOP AIDES OF EACH OF THESE AND THE LEADERS OF THE TWO PRINCIPAL POLITICAL PARTIES. AT THE OTHER END THREE MEDIA LEADERS: A NEWSPAPER EDITOR, A MAGAZINE PUBLISHER AND A COLUMINIST. WHILE THE NOTION EXISTS THAT THE CONCERN EXTENDS THROUGHOUT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND THROUGH THE MILITARY RANKS, IT IS A MINORITY OPINION. WHILE CONERN IS HIGH IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES
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AND SOMEWHAT LESS IN THE MEDIA, THERE IS NO BURNING INTEREST ON THE PART OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

2. SELF-GENERATED ISSUED OF INTEREST RANGE ALL OVER THE PLACE WITH MEDIA LEADERS BEING THOSE SHOWING THE GREATEST INTEREST IN SALT TALKS AND DETENTE. POLITICAL LEADERS APPARENTLY ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH SUCH THINGS AS KEEPING UP WITH COLOMBIA WHILE

MAINTAINING AN OVERALL REDUCTION OF ARMS IN SOUTH AMERICA. THE COMMON MILITARY OPINION IS THAT QUOTE ARMS CONTROL IS STUPID UNQUOTE AND THAT QUOTE VENEZUELA IS GOING TO MODERNIZE ITS FORCES UNQUOTE.. REGARDLESS. A U.S. MILITARY OFFICER, RECENTLY ATTENDING A JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF MEETING HERE WAS TOLD: "IF YOU AMERICANS CONTINUE WITH YOUR CURRENT ARMS CONTROL POLICIES THERE WILL BE A FRENCH OFFICER SITTING IN THE CHAIR YOU NOW HAVE IN ANOTHER FIVE YEARS." EXCEPT FOR STRAIGHT REPORTIN ON THE SSOD AT WHICH FONMIN CONSALVI MADE A SPEECH FOR VENEZUELA, LITTLE ON ARMS CONTROL/DISARMAMENT HAS APPEARED IN THE LOCAL PRESS. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S BOLETIN, WHICH GOES TO AN ELITE AUDIENCE, DID DEVOTE EIGHT PAGES TO EXCERPTS WITH PHOTOS FROM FONMIN CONSALVI'S UN SPEECH IN WHICH HE EXPRESSED THIRD WORLD ATTITUDES TOWARD THE WORLD "ARMS RACE." AND THE LITTLE THAT DID APPEAR IN THE PRESS SHOWED UP IN EL MUNDO, A SENSATIONALIST AFTERNOON DAILY, ON JUNE 28 AND JULY 3 AND 4. IT PUBLISHED A THREE PART SERIES, BYLINED BY ANTHONY SAMPSON, ON "SAM CUMMINGS, ERCHANT OF ARMS AND DEATH". AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE SERIES POINTED OUT THAT IN THE APPROXIMATELY 100 MILITARY ACTIONS OF ALL TYPES THAT HAVE ERUPTED SINCE WORLD WAR TWO, THE SMALL ARMS HE SUPPLIED CAUSED MOST OF THE CASUALTIES; THAT HE WAS A SUPPLIER OF IDI AMIN; THAT HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE REARMING OF CHINA,"....SOMETHING THAT ALL OF US IN THIS BUSINESS KNOW WILL HAPPEN."

3. DEGREE OF INTEREST ON SPECIFIC TOPICS WAS AS FOLLOWS IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PERCENTAGES:

- A. 20 VERY HIGH, 40 HIGH, 20 MEDIUM, 20 LOW.
- B. 20 VERY HIGH, 40 HIGH AND 40 MEDIUM
- C. 20 LOW AND 80 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
- D. 20 HIGH, 40 MEDIUM , 20 LOW AND 20 VERY LOW.
- E. 20 MEDIUM, 40 LOW AND 40 VERY LOW.
- F. 80 VERY HIGH, 20 HIGH
- G. 60 VERY HIGH, 20 HIGH, 20 MEDIUM
- H. 40 VERY HIGH, 40 HIGH, 20 MEDIUM.
- I. 40 HIGH, 60 MEDIUM.
- J. 80 HIGH, 20 MEDIUM.
- K. 20 VERY HIGH, 50 HIGH, 30 MEDIUM.

4. THERE WAS AN OVERWHELMING OPINION THAT THE UNITED STATES IS INTERESTED IN MEANINGFUL ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT; THAT THE USSR HAS MORE ARMS THAN IT NEEDS; THAT COMPLETION OF THE SALT AGREEMENT AND THE TEST BAN TREATY IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL COUNTRIES; THAT U.S. NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION POLICIES ARE WELL INTENTIONED; THAT ARMS SHOULD NOT BE SOLD TO NATIONS VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS; THAT NUCLEAR -FREE ZONES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO WORLD PEACE; THAT VENEZUELA SHOULD TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL AND THAT THERE ARE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR

REGIONAL ARMS CONTROL IN SOUTH AMERICA. AT THE SAME TIME THERE WAS A
CONSENSUS THAT VENEZUELA DID NOT RPT NOT HAVE MORE ARMS THAN IT
NEEDS. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE GIVEN IN PARA 7 OF REFTEL WERE
AS FOLLOWS BY PERCENTAGES:

- A. 20 STRONGLY AGREE, 80 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS.
- B. 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 EQUALLY DIVIDED, 40 DISAGREE
WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 STRONGLY DISAGREE
- C. 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 STRONGLY DISAGREE AND 40 HAD
INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
- D. 40 STRONGLY AGREE, 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 HAD INSUFFICIENT
INFORMATION.
- E. 20 EQUALLY DIVIDED, 40 DISAGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 40 STRONGLY
DISAGREE.
- F. 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 DISAGREE WITH
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- RESERVATIONS, 40 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION
- G. 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 40 DISAGREE WITH RESERVATIONS,
40 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
 - H. 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 EQUALLY DIVIDED,
40 DISAGREE WITH RESERVATIONS.
 - I. 60 STRONGLY AGREE, 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS.
 - J. 60 STRONGLY AGREE, 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS.
 - K. 20 STRONGLY AGREE 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 60 DISAGREE WITH
RESERVATIONS.
 - L. 20 STRONGLY AGREE, 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 EQUALLY DIVIDED
40 DISAGREE WITH RESERVATIONS.
 - M. 20 STRONGLY AGREE, 80 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS.
 - N. 20 STRONGLY AGREE , 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 DISAGREE
WITH RESERVATIONS, 40 STRONGLY DISAGREE.
 - O. 20 EQUALLY DIVIDED, 40 DISAGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 STRONGLY
DISAGREE, 20 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
 - P. 80 STRONGLY AGREE, 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS
 - Q. 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 80 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
 - R. 20 STRONGLY DISAGREE, 80 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
 - S. 40 STRONGLY AGREE, 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 EQUALLY
DIVIDED, 20 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
 - T. 20 STRONGLY AGREE, 60 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 INSUFFICIENT
INFORMATION.
 - U. 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 EQUALLY DIVIDED, 20 DISAGREE WITH
RESERVATIONS, 20 STRONGLY DISAGREE, 20 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
 - V. 20 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 10 EQUALLY DIVIDED, 20 DISAGREE
WITH RESERVATIONS, 50 INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION.
 - W. 40 STRONGLY AGREE, 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 20 EQUALLY
DIVIDED.
 - X. 60 STRONGLY AGREE, 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS.
 - Y. 20 STRONGLY AGREE, 40 AGREE WITH RESERVATIONS, 40 DISAGREE WITH
RESERVATIONS.

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5. TWO PRINCIPAL RESEARCH AGENCIES INCARACAS INDICATE NO SUCH SURVEYS CONDUCTED.

6. OPINIONS IN PARAGRAPHS THREE AND FOUR OF THIS CABLE WERE OBTAINED BY SURVEYING PRINCIPAL MEMBERS OF COUNTRY TEAM, INCLUDING CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, WHO WERE TO REPLY AS THEY BELIEVED THEIR CONTACTS WOULD ANSWER. INFORMATION IN PARAS ONE AND TWO ALSO WAS OBTAINED FROM THESE SOURCES. CPAO AND IO TALKED DISCREETLY TLAKED WITH TWO IMPORTANT JOURNALISTIC CONTACTS WITH H CONFLICTING RESULTS. ONE, AN ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER OF LOCAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY, REPORTED THERE WAS LITTLE AWARENESS OF ARMS CONTROL/DISARMAMENT AMONG THE MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC. THE OTHER, PUBLISHER F THE PRESTIGIOUS MORNING DAILY, EL NACIONAL, WAS CONVINCED THAT RESPONSIBLE OPINION-MAKERS ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH ISSUE AS A MAJOR WORLD PROBLEM. OVERALL RELIABILITY CONSIDERED TO BE ABOVE EIGHTY PERCENT LEVEL BECAUE OF QUALITY AND FREQUENCY OF CONTACTS BY COUNTRYTEAM WITH INDIVIDUALS MENTIONED IN PARA ONE. KEY

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